



INSIDE

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY IN EUROPE

#09 SEPTEMBER 2012



Europe is one of seven regions within the International Association of Facilitators. The IAF Europe team members volunteer their time to plan and support activities and services for IAF members living in Europe.

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ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The IAF Europe Newsletter is published monthly by the IAF Europe Regional Team for members of the International Association of Facilitators living within Europe.

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Cover picture: Mary Alice Arthur facilitates a discussion at the Art of Hosting gathering held in Slovenia at the end of August.

Please send your contributions to your Newsletter to rosemary.cairns@iaf-europe.eu

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What is the Peacemakers Project?

By Anna Gregory

It's Tuesday afternoon and I'm with 28 six year olds and their teacher in a Peacemaker Circle. After a giggly start with their favourite mixer game, we begin to explore 'blaming language' as part of the session.

The children quickly recognise the impact of blameful language on their own and other's feelings and how it can escalate conflict. We start to use a bit of drama to try out situations that might encourage blame and I'm struck by how keen they are to learn new ways of expressing their feelings and needs in these situations.

I take some time out of the drama to hear from the circle about how they might say things differently the next time there's a falling out in the classroom, playground or at home.

This Year Two Peacemaker circle is part of the work that I'm doing with the West Midlands Quaker Peace Education Project (WMQPEP). In 2011, funding was granted from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust to explore how we could develop our offer to partner schools long-term to see our work rolled-out more comprehensively¹. This led us to develop a three year 'whole school approach' pilot project.

Our vision for a Whole School Approach to Peace Education is to:

Create safer schools with better conditions for learning

To develop skills for life in the area of conflict resolution.

Encourage every member of the school community to be better equipped to make, maintain and repair relationships

Explore ways to help schools build and maintain peaceful relationships at all levels

As a pilot project, we want to test a number of initiatives within three schools and evaluate their effectiveness over a two year period. Restorative practices inform a lot of the work carried out and we utilise a number of facilitation techniques in order to train, develop and encourage change and growth within the school working with the entire school community: governors, senior leaders, teachers, support staff, lunchtime staff and children.

Building trust, ownership, responsibility

All sessions take place in a circle and are facilitated by a Peacemakers trainer. The trainer works to encourage trust, ownership and responsibility within the circle so that the content and management of the circle shifts from being adult-led to circle-led.

A number of techniques are used within the circle to ensure everyone can take part as much as they need to. For example, I use a "talking piece" to hear from everyone in the circle. I use a squishy, tactile kush ball that people like to play with as they think and talk.

I'm not strict about making sure the talking piece goes to everyone in the circle (there's always the option to 'pass') and I like to make the most of randomising tools (such as lollipop sticks with names on them, matching cards, ribbon



lengths and so on) to elicit responses and form groupings arbitrarily.

Back to my session with Year Two and I've just used my favourite mixing and grouping activity, placing coloured stickers on the children's backs and encouraging them to find the same colour sticker without talking, looking at or showing the sticker.

At first they think the task is impossible and then the light bulbs go on as they realise the key is to help others find out what their coloured sticker is and not focus too much on individual accomplishment of the task. Another bonus from this activity is using the newly formed groupings for the next activity.

Learning cooperation

The circle is often so pleased with their team-working and creative communication discoveries and achievements from the previous exercise that they have little time to bemoan the new groupings they are in.

We later discuss the positive outcomes associated with working with people you might not know so well. A member of the circle comments:

When I started in Year 4 I wasn't very good at cooperating with others, but since you've been I'm good now.

The strategic use of mixing games to ensure the circle make-up is constantly varied is key to all Peacemaker sessions with adults and children. During any Peacemaker session with children -

including my session with the year Twos - there is a focus on the five circle time skills (listening, speaking, looking, concentrating and thinking) in all activities.

I use funny flashcards as visual reminders when I want to emphasise a particular skill during an activity or ask the children to identify which of the five skills they use, find easy or find difficult for a given activity. The Year Two teacher comments:

The children retained their knowledge of the five key skills and how these affect their learning. They (and we) referred to them often between sessions, and after the course had finished.



Various techniques used

In brief, other techniques that are used consistently as part of any Peacemaker session, whether it is staff training, circle time, small group or one-to-one intervention work with children and coaching sessions with adults include:

- A pre-agreed signal for anyone to use to stop the action and ask for quiet from the circle
- Use of forum theatre to identify and explore conflict and rehearse solutions to these situations²
- Group and individual assessment of learning (this includes adults, children and Peacemaker Trainer)
- The use of affirmation exercises (sharing true, positive statements about each other)
- The use of restorative approaches to build, maintain and repair relationships
- World Café style carousel facilitation

There is so much to say about how these tools are used in a school setting but I'm in danger of going over the word limit! Please get in touch if you'd like to hear in a bit more detail about these processes.

What next?

As I write I'm preparing work for next year which will focus on providing intensive training to a group of staff who will form the 'champion group' for the school and look to build on and develop the practices that have been modelled in the school so far.

I want to support the school to make a lasting change to its approach to the building, maintai-



Peer Mediators

ning and repairing of relationships. This change can be evidenced at policy and performance management level, in formal and informal interactions around the school, in teaching and learning and in the schools' physical environment.

Collaboration with Cambridge University will help to analyse the work and distance travelled in the schools so far to establish how we might offer a sustainable model of this work to other schools.

I'm keen to share with other schools and organisations the lessons I'm learning as the 'Peacemakers: A Whole School Approach' model develops. I'd like to find out from others how they utilise similar ideas in their own settings so please get in touch.

Who are Peacemakers?

We are the West Midland Quaker Peace Education Project and our work has developed over the past twenty five years, which was when local Quakers founded the charity, believing that we need to educate people for peace. The training is non-sectarian and we deliver it to those of any religion, or none. The core aim of the organisation is to help create a more peaceful world, with more caring and resilient communities.

If you would like to find out more about our work and please contact Anna Gregory.

- tel: 0121 454 9069
- e-mail: anna@peacemakers.org.uk
- web: www.peacemakers.org.uk

Footnotes

¹The impact of this pilot is being independently evaluated by Cambridge University

²Forum Theatre: the presentation of a short play (either by professional or non-professional actors) whereby a negative conclusion is made. For example, a young person experiences discrimination in the workplace and leaves. The play is discussed by with the audience (who usually have a connection with the material i.e. be young people) and re-worked. Through discussion, facilitation and re-working a number of new/different outcomes can be explored. The aim of Forum Theatre is to empower the audience to make a change within their own lives. depth and quality.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Anna Gregory is the Regional Coordinator for the West Midlands Quaker Peace Education Project, responsible for implementing a whole school approach to conflict resolution using restorative practices.

Prior to this, Anna managed the Peer Education Service for Shelter, working with young people who had experience of a housing need to deliver a homelessness prevention project direct to children and young people in universal and targeted settings.

Previously, Anna worked as a facilitator, director and performer delivering theatre-in-education projects direct to young people in schools, youth offending and community settings. Anna's specialist area is in Forum Theatre and has delivered Forum Theatre experiences to clients including the NHS, Shelter, schools, teachers, Local Authorities and professional theatres. Anna is trained as a Forum Theatre facilitator and brings this inclusive and innovative approach to much of her work.

After reading Theatre, Media and Cultural Studies at University, Anna began her career teaching theatre and performing arts to post-16 students. Anna has a Certificate of Education (7407) to teach young people and adults in community settings.

We need more grandmothers to step forward

By Mary Alice Arthur

I'm not exactly sure how I found out about the 13 Indigenous Grandmothers, but when I learned two younger women friends were going to the 11th Gathering in Montana in July, something called me to come along too. And this time, I would have to truly trust I would be looked after because the event was to be held on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation in a Pow Wow ground outside of Lame Deer and the requirement was total self-sufficiency. I didn't have any camping gear, I didn't have any way to get to the reservation and I didn't have long to work it out.

Once again, the grandmother energy was rising for me and it was an opportunity to consider it in action. Our Western societal view of older women is not a friendly one. We have the ugly stepmother, the wicked witch, the too sweet Fairy Godmother or the dried up crone. We've made our elders into elderly. The image of the powerful, potent and wise elder woman – the “dangerous old woman”, as Dr Clarissa Pinkola Estés calls her – needs a revival. Indeed, our planet is calling for this wisdom in service of life itself.

But how do you become wise? And how do you become an elder?

In traditional societies there was the opportunity to sit at the feet of the elders, to absorb their wisdom, perhaps even apprentice with someone from a very young age. This offered the combination of what could be called a “wisdom transmission” – being in the energetic field of someone deeply in their wisdom practice – and action learning – actively working alongside an experienced practitioner.

You would be the one to fetch and carry, but you would also be trained as a healer, shaman, storyteller, saga singer, midwife, or medicine person in service of the community. So not only would you receive the skill you needed, you



Grandmothers and Ambassadors in Dharamsala

would also have been trained in how that skill is practiced, how it is invited by the community, what the appropriate exchange is that seals the wisdom requested.

Not easy to become wise

Do not think for one minute that it is easy to become wise. Nor is it easy to be called to be an elder. This is a pathway of great challenge and great sacrifice. You might be called to give away everything in exchange for who you are to become.

In traditional societies, it is also a sacrifice to be named a leader. On the Northern Cheyenne one of the chiefs came to speak with us and joked about the burden of responsibility. He is the last one to eat, the last one to rest, the first one to rise to the occasion if a request was made to him. What a different concept of leadership this is!

And the stories of the 13 Grandmothers are no less potent, full of loss, death, overcoming and challenge. All of them were called into their

craft at a young age, some following the family tradition and others stepping into their calling.

While some of them are revered by their communities, others receive suspicion and hostility, yet all are powerful healers in their own right. Some of them work with ceremony, some with plant medicine, some with song, some with spirits, all with prayer. They say that prayer and gratitude are the foundation for the healing that is needed now. They are a demonstration that prayer is powerful.

Together they are a council. This is a word worth studying. What happens to people when they sit together to council around something, especially when they are intentional about serving their community wisely? What happens when the council stays together for long enough to become a cohesive force for the positive? What happens to energy when it comes into a circle?

The 'torus' energy pattern

Those who study the energy around bodies say that both the human body and the earth herself exhibit an energy pattern called a torus. A torus looks rather like a doughnut in movement, with the energy continually moving from the centre around the curve to the edge and back again.

In human terms, that would mean both the centre and the edge are important and are continually being woven together. We get strength, sustenance and vision from what we hold as a focus at the centre. We get new ideas, innovation and a fresh perspective from being at the edge.

When I watched both the deep respect and regard each of the Grandmothers had for each other, and the lightness, humour and fierce protection they exhibited around the grandchildren – anyone's children – I could see the torus in action.

In our human families this was always how it was meant to be: the elders give their wisdom, their stories, their protection and their fierce and demanding love to the youngers. In return, the youngers give play, energy, fresh eyes to the world, their love of learning and their unconditional love to the elders. If anything, the doughnut we have now has a true hole in it, rather than the regenerating power of the torus.

Rebuilding the human circle

Perhaps this is the making of the elder – to have survived life's trials for long enough to gain compassion, to have collected enough that now there is enough to give away, to have achieved enough that now there is the desire to help others achieve, to have seen enough and witnessed enough that eyes become clear, the heart becomes strong and the focus becomes the service to all life. And the task of the elder is to help the human family rebuild the circle once again, so that the honouring and respect of life is at the heart of all we do.

We need more Grandmothers – and Grandfathers! – to step forward. We need less focus on "what's in it for me" and more on "who are we together?".

We need to move our view from short term to long term and from "right here" to "everywhere".

We need less debate and more council, less ownership and more stewardship, less information and more wisdom.

And perhaps most of all, we need the ability to be still and listen for the call – the call of life to step into partnership once more.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Mary-Alice Arthur is a travelling storyteller and narrative practitioner who has been working with groups of all kinds for more than a decade and has been involved in both personal and organizational transformation work. This is one of a series of four blog posts on eldership that Mary Alice has written. You can find the original posting at <http://www.storiesforchange.com/?p=497>

Brain diversity matters

By Mariette (Jet) Proost

Nowadays a lot of brain knowledge is easily available, presented in journals and other media. The brain is hot. We can read why women are better in multi-tasking, your grandmother can learn how to use an Apple and your teenaged son cannot help forgetting stuff. The land of make believe is soon to be when understanding how it all works. Or not?

Fortunately for us facilitators, the human behavior still holds many surprises and that is why your client needs you.

As facilitators we tend to work with people's cognition to find bright ideas, suitable solutions, innovative plans etc. In the meanwhile, our session participants are focused on easing their reptile brain and anticipating a social survival.

Born with the same set of brains (our natural hardware), we develop from childhood on a unique brain software. We learn to anticipate behavior that is socially acceptable and every experience is a building block shaping our individual set of brains.

How do we facilitators deal with this variety and diversity in the groups we work with? And what can we learn from recent insights from neuro sciences?

In our hands-on workshop during the Geneva Conference you experience interventions which can help you to be more effective as a facilitator. Join our workshop "Brain facilitation" on the Saturday morning.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Mariette (Jet) Proost has a background in rural sociology and extension science. After an academic career as associate professor in Communication Sci-

ences at Wageningen University, the Netherlands, she started her own consultancy firm in 1990. She works as a facilitator social change and innovation for non profit organisations, and trains academics in communication skills and leadership, in the Netherlands and overseas. Jet became an IAF CPF in 2005 and assessor in 2007. She works for various clients in agriculture, rural planning, water management and infrastructure. Her work as an all round facilitator for the LEF future center of the Dutch directorate for Public Works and Water Management the Netherlands, is the basis for the workshop "Brain facilitation" at the IAF 2012 EU conference in Geneva. Over the past 25 years Jet published a number of book chapters, journal articles, conference papers, reports and training guides in the field of participatory learning and research in action. See also <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/jet-proost/.com/?p=497>

49 ways to spice up your meetings

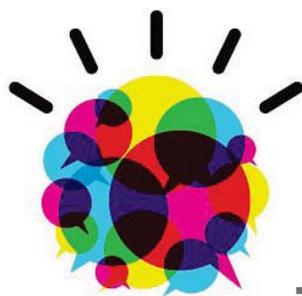
By Ruben van der Laan

Henry Ford would have loved producing our current day meetings the way he produced his cars.

His famous 'any colour - so long as it's black' would marvelously fit the numerous meetings that are being churned out worldwide. A meeting room is a meeting room and a meeting is a meeting. All black, all the same. There's just a slight variation in black because they're not all being produced by the same firm. So here are 49 ways to spice up your meetings and make them fun and colourful. And by the way: fun usually means also more effective (and no, I did not say efficient, that's a whole different story). So which one are you willing to try?

4 ways to spice up your prep work

- remove the table from the meeting room
- have nice sofas, comfy chairs and a glass of wine for the meeting
- play Mozart on the background
- organise a walk and have the meeting outside
- let every participant take off their shoes before entering the meeting room
- after each agenda item, change places
- have the meeting in the car park, the commuter train or a café
- have the meeting around the desk of the most junior participant. Thus you'll need to be short in order not to disturb other persons.



11 ways to communicate with all your senses

- don't use words in the meeting, communicate with doodling and drawing
- don't take any notes during the meeting
- say 'yes, and' to every suggestion someone makes
- communicate only by whispering into the ears of the participants next to you
- communicate between participants only by writing
- ask questions only by writing them down on a post-it and hanging them on the wall
- always let someone else speak your thoughts and concerns
- let the highest in hierarchy always speak last
- let the participants sit in a circle with their back to each other. This will make them listen carefully
- only let participants react in pairs
- let others present each others presentation

5 ways to play with meeting roles

- let the note-taker be the leader of the meeting and the leader the note-taker
- present someone else's presentation or comments
- have one chair less than participants, the one without the chair is the only one to speak. That participant is also the one that can choose the next speaker
- have only one chair, the one person sitting on that chair is the speaker. Once the chair is empty someone else can choose to sit
 - ask the most junior person what agenda item is most important to him or her, start with that agenda item.



8 ways to spice up your space

- remove the table from the meeting room
- have nice sofas, comfy chairs and a glass of wine for the meeting
- play Mozart on the background
- organise a walk and have the meeting outside
- let every participant take off their shoes before entering the meeting room
- after each agenda item, change places
- have the meeting in the car park, the commuter train or in the café
- have the meeting around the desk of the most junior participant. Thus you'll need to be short in order not to disturb other persons.





6 ways to time your meetings colourfully

- schedule it in the middle of the night
- don't have the meeting
- shorten the meeting by half
- split the meeting in two parts: one in the early morning and the second in the late afternoon
- assign speaking times and have a huge clock to keep people stick to the time
- schedule the meetings only in the afternoons, never in the mornings

10 ways to spice up your decision-making

- let one random participant make the decisions and then discuss about them
- make a list of all items that need discussion, throw the dice and discuss not more than the number of dots on the dice.
- make a list of all items that need discussion and flip a coin for each item. 'Head' = will be discussed now, 'tails' = not this meeting.
- don't make any decisions, discuss only the issues and then leave
- organise a greek chorus: have a random participant comment personally after each closed agenda item. This person can do it the way he/she wants
- after each decision ask: 'what's the fun part of this decision?'
- do a round of 'what do you really think?' after each decision, keep it anonymous
- only make decisions that affect everyone. If it affects a subgroup or a single participant, leave the decision out of the meeting room
- vote one participant out of the meeting after each decision made. The person voted out is the least relevant for the following agenda items
- do a round of drinks (coffee / tea) after each decision made, as a way to celebrate them



5 ways to follow-up differently on meetings

- only allow participants in the meeting if they've done their actions agreed from the previous meeting
- schedule the next meeting only when every item on the to do list has been done
- take 5 minutes to draft the meeting notes at the end in the form of a graphic visualisation. No other meeting notes are allowed
- let another participant sum up your action notes and then let him/her ask regularly about your follow up.
- make a list of all the decisions at the end of the meeting, cross two from that list by asking participants to vote for the ones they like least and don't follow-up on these two

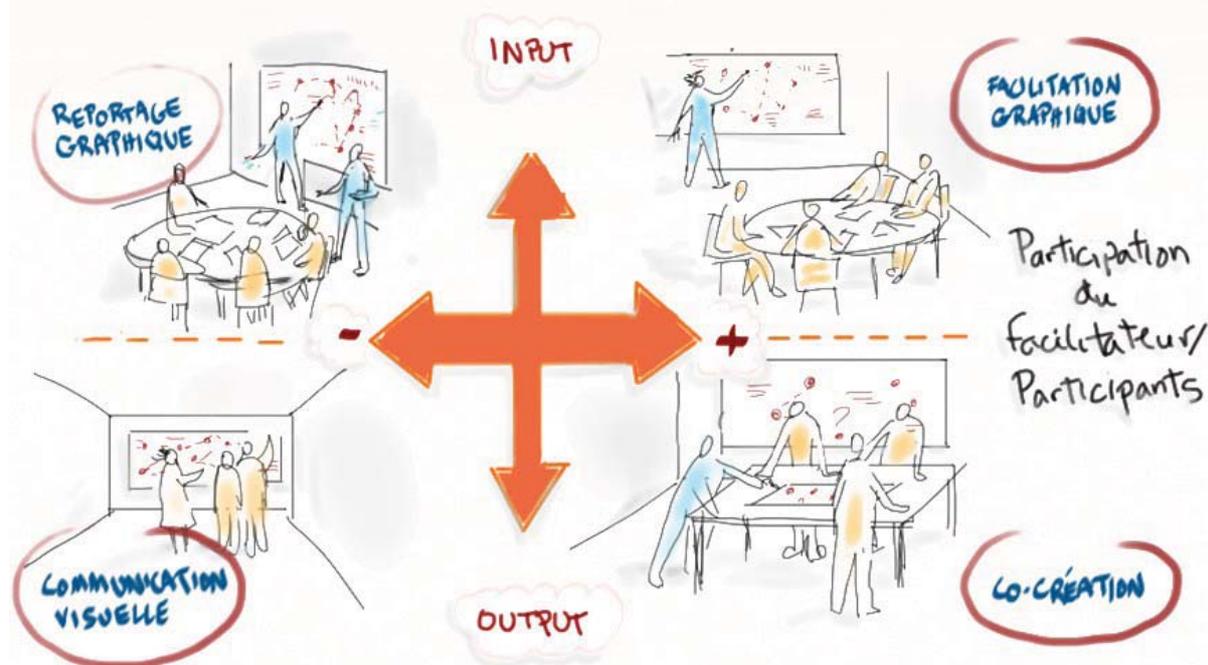
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ruben van der Laan brings groups into flow to unleash creativity, build engagement, and organise expediency. He relentlessly seeks to create the best meeting. As facilitator, he uses a vast array of creativity techniques, improvisational games, and participatory methods. Having grown up in Europe and Africa and worked worldwide with highly diverse groups, he feels at home in many cultures. He is fluent in Dutch, French and English. Ruben has been leading workshops at the IAF-Asia and IAF-Netherlands conferences and will present at the IAF-Europe conference in Geneva this year.

Ruben currently lives in the Netherlands, missing the food and weather of his former home, Thailand.
www.rubenvanderlaan.com

LA FACILITATION VISUELLE

Le visuel est utilisé pour



The visual revolution in facilitation

Introduction to graphic facilitation (Friday 5 October, 14:00 – 17:30)

By Roberta Faulhaber

Enhance meeting productivity with visually impactful flipcharts. Explore the impact of adding colour and shape to flipcharts and the “big paper” using simple, user-friendly techniques to change the atmosphere and effectiveness of your meetings. Turn on that hidden creativity by using chalk pastels and coloured markers to organize and emphasis the group’s process on paper. Leave with a wealth of confidence and visual vocabulary to start developing your own visual facilitation style.

In the past, facilitators primarily worked in the auditory mode... people talk, ask questions, make suggestions, try to solve problems – but how much of this wealth of group wisdom is lost if we only rely on our ears? Notes taken individually are fine, but they just don’t capture the group process.

Recently facilitators have begun following in the footsteps of such pioneers as David Sibbet of

The Grove, becoming increasingly aware that the use of visual approaches can be a valuable asset in improving group and individual memory, meeting productivity, and problem solving, to name just a few of the advantages. In the context of our conference theme – managing diversity – visual facilitation provides a remarkably effective tool to help people who are working in a foreign

language to bypass linguistic difficulties and remain fully involved.

Visual basics

In our 2012 visual facilitation workshops you will learn more about why and how it all works. Just to whet your appetites, we'll be giving you a brief overview of how the brain works and the importance of "whole-brain" functioning in facilitation sessions.

There's also some interesting research out there on collective intelligence and how the group "IQ" increases as a function of social adeptness – and, collaterally, the number of women in the group – which relates to the way people feel heard and recognized thanks to graphic tools.

Then there's the work of Martin J. Eppler, one of the few people doing research on the use of visual approaches in a business context, adding to a growing body of research around the visual revolution.

I am delighted to have the opportunity to pass on some basic skills in visual facilitation. Remember, you don't need to know "how to draw" to vastly improve those skills. The objective of the workshop is to get you past the unreadable flipchart stage and into a skillset where

you can design your own facilitation big-paper material and take notes visually thanks to an introduction to basic visual vocabulary and the basics of organizing space.

Useful templates

I will also introduce you to three useful and simple templates to enhance group productivity, harvest collective wisdom, and organize information and ideas. By the end of the session, you'll have learned some of the fundamentals of visual note-taking – lettering, connectors, bullet points, shadows, frames, people, colour, and a range of easy-to-draw picto-ideo-emoicograms – and you'll be eager to begin using these new skills!

You'll also have a better idea about why and how to integrate visual approaches into your practice as a facilitator, either on your own or in a co-facilitation context with a visual practitioner.

And don't miss Fran O'Hara's workshop, Engage and excite! Visual facilitation and communication methods to remove barriers to engagement, to build on these skills and develop new expertise and confidence in a range of proven visual-led engagement methods and techniques. (Fran O'Hara, Saturday 6 October, 09:00 – 12:30)





Photo by Jean-Philippe Poupard

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Roberta Faulhaber has been working with visual language and in visual communication since she first studied art at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. She is based in Paris and is busily introducing French companies to the benefits of visual facilitation, joining many different types of meetings and conferences to graphically translate the ideas, processes, and emotions that emerge from a working group into large visuals on paper and facilitate the harvesting of collective intelligence in both English and French. Examples of her work can be found at www.facilitationvisuelle.fr. Roberta also develops and leads training sessions in visual meetings, sketchnoting, and graphic facilitation for coaches, facilitators, managers, students, and other visual practitioners in a partnership with Formapart.

Process Design

Where facilitator's expertise is most called for

By Lan Levy

The power of a facilitation service resides in the process and the capacity of the facilitator to guide the group through this process. It's also the only place where the facilitator is more than ever visible (which is not the case when he is with the group during his facilitation).

Facilitators make decisions about the process and must be the ones who know exactly what to do in each step of the process.

I've experienced a situation where there was no process and the organizer improvised step by step. After a while, he lost his credibility in the group and then he lost the group completely.

I've experienced a workshop where the process is not adapted to the group's needs. Participants are forced to work on something that they don't care about, are not interested in, or not ready to work on. What the client got were frustrated participants, poor participation and a bad result.

The best experience that I had is in a workshop where we knew why we were there and what we needed to do; the topic was interesting; and the facilitator knew exactly how we would proceed. When our energy was low, the facilitator adapted the process and method so we didn't feel too tired to continue. We finished the workshop really happy with what we accomplished.

Designing a good process

So what makes a good process? When preparing for a session and designing a process, the facilitator needs to take in to account:

- The situation of the client and their real needs
- The objectives of the intervention, expected results
- What are important questions of the workshop?
- The participants: who should participate? The number of participants?

- The impact of this intervention: what changes? Who affected?
- ...

And he/she can then think of what methods would he use in this case, what are important steps? What is the adapted process?

Finally, visualize the whole process for yourself. You'll see things that you don't see with eyes open!

In this whole process, the facilitator is constantly in contact with the client and validating the process with them before any meeting or workshop begins.

The design work becomes complicated when you have a project which lasts for a long time (6 months, 1 year, 2 years...) during which you have to design not just one process, but both a big process and a series of small processes.

And when your boss comes to you and says that: "I would like you to conduct this project. We've negotiated the contract and the process in general". What do you do in this case?

You are welcome to my session at the IAF European Conference in Geneva next month to experience this situation and work together to find out what process would fit most.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Lan Levy was trained in Technology of Participation (ToP-ICA) in Vietnam in 2003. Working for an ONG, she firstly used facilitation in development projects in Vietnam for Asian development Bank and World Bank and then for organizations and companies in different cultures and contexts.

After arriving in Paris in late 2006, she decided to develop professional facilitation in France since the profession was really unknown there. After five years of hard work and perseverance, Lan is working now for Coactiv as facilitator and trainer. She co-initiated and facilitates a community of practice, and is treasurer of IAF Paris chapter.

Diversity in Thinking

By Ann Alder

The theme of this year's IAF Europe Conference in Geneva is diversity. And it is perhaps ironic that this is an area which itself creates enormously diverse reactions and responses, from the exploration of hugely important beliefs about how we treat people in our daily lives to ridiculous examples of extreme and irritating 'political correctness'.

In this article, and in my workshop in Geneva, I intend to move away from differences around gender, ethnicity, disability and social mobility and explore the value of one specific example of diversity in action in community and organisational life. I will be illustrating how this diversity creates the culture of teams, impacts upon personal behavior, and generates both creative tension and potentially damaging conflict – even within groups that appear, on the surface, to be homogenous.

The diversity that I refer to is the diversity in our most trusted thinking processes and the way in which this leads us to different values, priorities and individual perspectives. In order to function successfully in our communities and organisations, we need to develop an awareness of this diversity and expertise in managing it in a positive and creative way.

An example of diversity leading to conflict

During a recent facilitation session, I observed two of my group members reaching a point of frustration with each other that was threatening to damage their working relationship. These two women were working together on a shared project, with a common goal.

On paper, they were as 'similar' as it would be possible to imagine: similar age, educational background, professional qualification, shared ethnicity and regional upbringing. However, the diversity in their preferred thinking styles was noticeable.

Let's call my two characters Lorna and Marie (good, Scottish names from their shared herita-

ge!). Lorna and Marie were charged with the design and preparation of a new training workshop, for roll-out in the business in which they both worked.

Lorna was relaxed about the process, believing that the bulk of the work was done, the deadlines were easily achievable and that only the final details remained to be completed. Marie was exhibiting signs of stress and frustration, was convinced that the deadlines would be missed and suggested that a 'huge' amount of work remained to be done.

Her constant questioning and focus on structure and detail was being received by Lorna as nagging. "Marie is obsessed with unnecessary detail", she said. In contrast, Lorna's apparently laissez-faire approach was described by Marie as "a complete failure to understand the seriousness and complexity of what we are working on."

If we think about the diversity in the ways that seemingly similar people think, we begin to uncover factors that contribute to both conflict and creativity.

Lorna's thinking preferences led her to focus on the future, create a big picture, visualize success and feel comfortable that a flexible and creative response to problems would ensure a productive and exciting training programme.

In contrast, Marie's thinking preferences led her to seek safety and a sense of control, through detailed planning and attention to detail. She needed a rational and structured process, with everything closed down, whereas Lorna actively sought to keep decisions open to accommodate what she saw as future possibilities.

The 'Whole Brain Thinking Model'

Those of you familiar with the concept of 'Whole Brain Thinking' will recognize that these characters represented extreme diversity in their preferred thinking styles. In Ned Herrmann's model, (1) measured using the HBDI assessment, Lorna and Marie scored highly on Upper Right

(Quadrant D) thinking and Lower Left (Quadrant B) thinking respectively.

These preferences almost inevitably create tension – either an ‘internal tension’ that we experience as individuals or inter-personal tension as experienced by Lorna and Marie.

In this situation, active facilitation allowed the two to explore their diverse approaches and build confidence in each other. Without an external intervention, it is likely that their relationship would have been damaged and the project delayed. As they worked together with the facilitator, they recognized the potential power that their diversity offered in initiating (Lorna) and completing (Marie) their work. They were able to clarify their roles and change their language to work together more effectively.

In other group and team situations, awareness of the power of diverse thinking styles can achieve great results. In a problem-solving process,

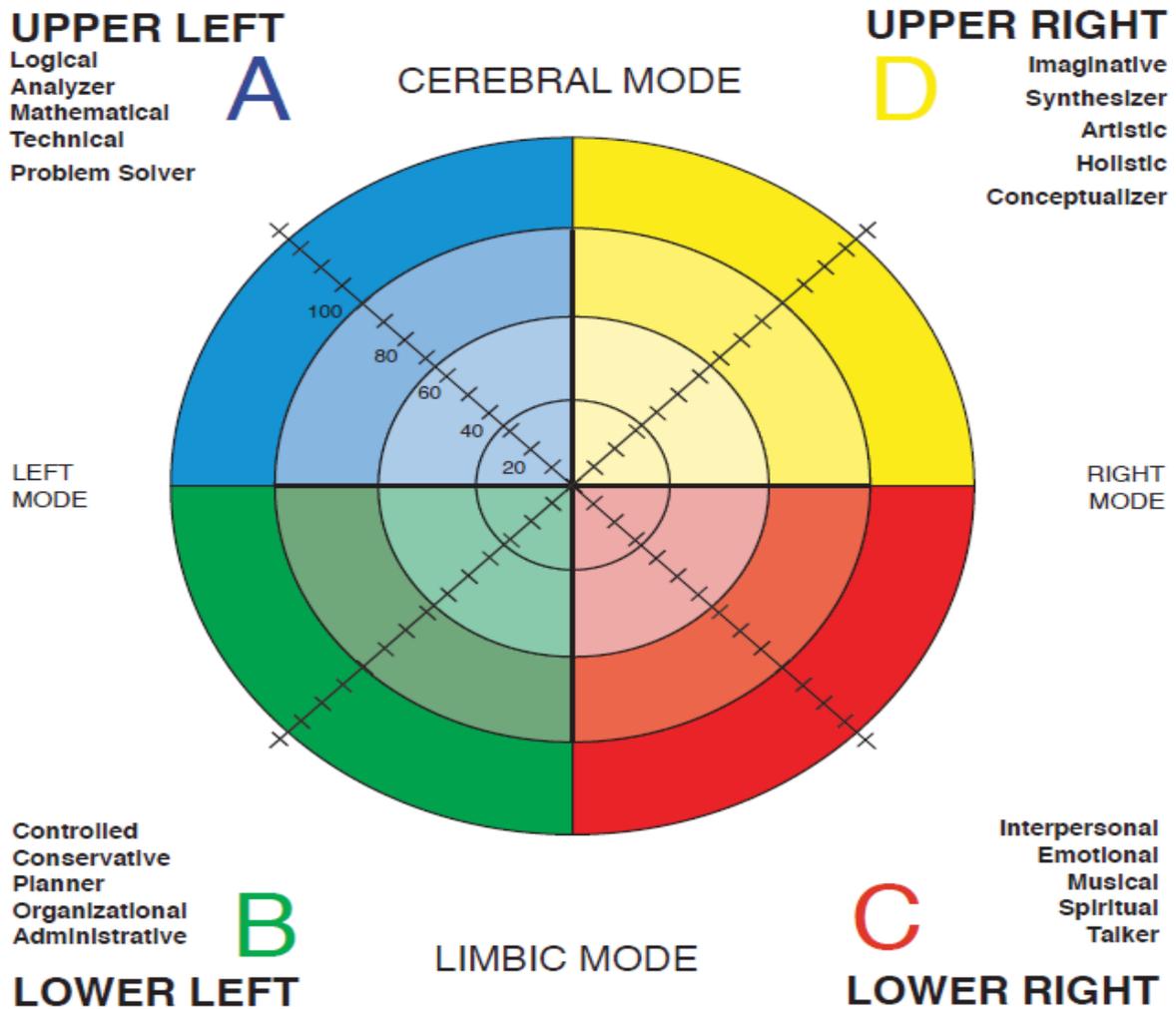
it is clear to see that different types of thinking are appropriate at different stages in the process.

If we apply creative, imaginative, solution-focused thinking too early, we risk missing the problem analysis that we need to do to ensure we are tackling the right problem!

If we focus too much on building rational arguments to justify our strategic choices, we may miss the part of the process that considers the ‘human reaction’ to our decisions and anticipates the emotional objections it may bring about.

Diversity in our thinking styles is one of many factors that ensure that we all have different perspectives on the same situation. It is linked to our values, our attitudes and our ability, or inability, to relate easily to others. In my experience, it is as significant, or perhaps even more significant, than diversity in gender, race or age.

For facilitators, the ability to recognize and pay attention to these different preferences is another powerful tool in our facilitation toolkit.



Going virtual to ride the storm

By Carol Sherriff and Simon Wilson

Virtual facilitation is now part of our lives as facilitators – but we need to develop our skills to cope. Wilson Sherriff, a facilitation company based in the UK, is carrying out a survey of facilitators and coaches about their experiences of virtual facilitation. We'd love you to add your views – you can follow the link to the survey here: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FQJWJTB>

Interim results from the survey show the following:

- Nearly half of respondents' work is virtual as opposed to face to face – although slightly less for working with groups than with individuals
- The most used forms of technology are telephone conferences, email, online meeting platforms, and video conferences
- The main advantages of working virtually are seen as saving costs, time and travel, and anonymity for participants in some cases
- The main disadvantages of working virtually are seen as inability to read body language and visual cues, technological problems and 'my own skill levels'
- Potential opportunities in working virtually are reaching global participants, including people

who might not otherwise be involved, providing a quality service, and saving costs.

We will be publishing full results of the survey soon, so please do take part and have your say,

We are also offering two opportunities for facilitators to come together virtually and explore these issues.

Last year we created a virtual space for facilitators, consultants and coaches to discuss the issues that concern them. We coined the term 'Riders on the Storm' to describe people who are called into organisations when the going gets rough. We found that facilitators need to be able to steer their clients through rough waters, stay calm themselves no matter how hard others are raging around them, and of course manage stormy weather in their own business or practice.

Riders on the Storm 2012, our second free event in this series, runs from 17 to 23 September and features podcast interviews with expert speakers on subjects such as social media, co-creation, work-life balance, and running a business. You can sign up at www.ridersonthestormsummit.com

We are also offering the opportunity to improve your virtual facilitation skills. **The Virtual Facilitator** is a pre-conference event for the IAF Geneva conference. Uniquely, you don't have to go to Geneva to take part (although it helps) as this event runs virtually from 21 September to 2 October. If you are attending the Geneva conference, there will be a face to face debrief at the conference. You can sign up at www.iaf-europe-conference.org

We hope you will join us for one or both of these events, and please let us have any other thoughts about the future of virtual facilitation by emailing carol.sherriff@wilsonsherriff.com

“ We found that facilitators need to be able to steer their clients through rough waters, stay calm themselves no matter how hard others are raging around them, and of course manage stormy weather in their own business or practice. ”

Facilitating Learning Across Cultures & Countries

By Pamela Lupton-Bowers

In addition to pure facilitation work with groups around the world, a lot of my time is spent in what might be described as training, but what I clearly designate as ‘facilitative learning’.

At the moment I am spending an inordinate amount of time working with scientist and public health specialist in their challenge of transferring learning about best practice to countries and communities around the globe.

The challenge of sharing knowledge is multi faceted. There are the typical challenges of gaining people’s attention, maintaining their attention, improving understanding and recall, and ultimately getting them to learn, which I consider has only happened in observable changes of practice and behaviour. That in and of itself is a big enough challenge.

But the bigger challenge with some of the latest research and best practice is in helping groups think through how the latest and considered best practice can be applicable and relevant to places where they live and work.

Much of the latest knowledge comes from the western and developed world, and it is quite challenging to implement in countries where they can’t rely on the same infrastructures, where they don’t have access to the same resources, or the same facilities, and they can’t expect to get the same support for latest thinking and ideas when they are up against cultural differences, religious suspicions, local traditional healers and traditional, patriarchal societies.

So, one of the biggest challenges in the whole area of transfer on knowledge is helping learners think about how new technologies, new treatments, new approaches can be applicable to countries which have a very, very different context to the ones in which the research was originally established.

That’s where facilitation comes in. And this is where I can genuinely and honestly say that I can not and do not influence the decisions people need to make in order to apply learning that transforms their communities.



Women in Kibera, Nairobi working out how to help support another in their micro financing projects.

I can help the specialists transfer their knowledge, but to determine how useful and how relevant the knowledge will be depends on the groups themselves reflecting, framing and imagining how they will implement the new ideas.. Wherever the training happens to be delivered Pakistan, Afghanistan, Thailand, Cambodia, Nigeria, Caribbean, Chad or Congo, it is critical that we can help facilitate people in making the best use of the knowledge available to them.

That's what I'd like to share in the two day preconference workshop which is about Facilitating Learning. Not only will I share some of the basics of brain based, friendly learning but also the techniques that I have used in working with groups in more than 50 countries and in different languages and in very different contexts. Such an approach demands clearly understanding your role and responsibility as trainer and also as a facilitator. You must always be aware of which hat you are wearing and which role you are choosing to model.

In addition to the pre conference workshop, I am

also delighted to be offering another fun session in the conference programme. I am calling the session 'Nemawashi' - Determining how ready they are to change.

I borrowed the term Nemawashi from Japanese business. It is used to describe the process in which traditionally Japanese business people have quietly gained support for an idea before it is tabled or presented in any formal way before a bigger group. It is a way of eroding resistance for an idea before it goes to vote. However, I am told by younger, modern Japanese professionals that there has been an active move away from Nemawashi towards getting more transparency about decision making in Japanese companies. Nevertheless, successful nemawashi enables changes to be carried out with the consent of all sides.

My interpretation of Nemawashi comes from the original meaning of the word coming from gardening. The word is made up of 'Ne' meaning roots, and 'mawasu' meaning to go around.

Its original meaning was literal: digging around the roots of a tree, to prepare it for a transplant. It can be roughly translated as 'laying the groundwork.'

I use this concept of laying the groundwork to describe how much effort I and the group needs to invest before its 'roots' or currently held, preconceived notions about the given topic are willing to be moved or changed.

I will share a simple Boston box model that helps me in my planning of the necessary preparation a group needs to go through for us to have the most optimal emotional state for acknowledging differences and being willing to consider change.

There are dozens of interesting sessions at this year's IAF Europe Conference. We have purposefully selected a small wonderful hotel on the shores of Lake Geneva and limited the numbers to keep the conference intimate and friendly. Please make sure you sign up to take advantage of the lower hotel rates before rooms run out. I am looking forward to seeing you all.



Time to have your say on your IAF

By Simon Wilson, IAF Board Director for Membership and Chapters

The annual opportunity to have your say about the future of your Association, the IAF, has come round again. Please complete the membership survey which can be found by following this link: www.surveymonkey.com/s/8RHYLSC

The IAF Board and a number of working groups would like to hear your views on a range of issues affecting our future, including the membership benefits you are looking for, the Methods Database, certification and recertification, a potential training accreditation programme, and even a possible name change!

Please do take the time to fill in the survey. It would be great to have your responses by 17 September 2012 – but a few days later will also be fine. All responses are anonymous, but the Board will provide feedback on your views and how we plan to move forward on these issues.

For the first time we also have the survey available in Spanish – please follow here: www.surveymonkey.com/s/8N35NCD

FREE Workshop at Kinharvie Institute

*Facilitating Effective Action Planning
Monday 10th September 2012*

This 2 hour workshop at Kinharvie Institute in Glasgow, Scotland, is for anyone who wants to learn an efficient and effective action planning process. The workshop will provide the fundamentals to using the proven Pinpoint facilitation technique to aid the action planning agenda.

Benefits to you/your organisation:

- Learn processes that quickly get people engaged in the action planning process
 - Produce better and faster plans
 - Manage the complexity of group processes to ensure people stay on task
- Find out more at <http://bit.ly/PNBsn2>

Envisioning the library of the future

Involve and Dialogue by Design (DbyD) have been commissioned by the Arts Council England (ACE) to explore with citizens the purpose and value of public libraries. Over the course of September, they will be running a series of deliberative workshops across England and an online consultation to gather people's views – as citizens and taxpayers – on what the library of the future should look like.

Libraries are an important source of information and knowledge, and provide a shared public space where people meet and interact and can play a role in the development of communities. But while libraries have helped to shape, define and celebrate communities, they have also had to evolve and innovate as communities and society has changed around them.

With public funding being decreased considerably, libraries are having to demonstrate their public value, increase their reach and explore new models of delivery. The pressure for libraries to innovate and adapt has, however, been around for much longer than the financial crisis.

Social, economic, demographic, cultural and technological changes has led to decreased borrowing of books and changes in how people choose and expect to access and consume information. Libraries have responded by offering digital services and content, and identifying new ways in which to engage people, thus becoming much more of a community hub and social space.

It is within this context of change that ACE embarked upon its programme of research to inform development of a vision for the library of the future. Involve is excited to be working with ACE and DbyD to ensure that the ideas, views and values of citizens form an important part of that vision.

For more information, contact the project manager ingrid@involve.org.uk

New board of Danish IAF Chapter

Congratulations to Peter Grumstrup, newly appointed chair of the board of the Danish IAF-chapter, and the new members of the board. Michael Ørbech, secretary, served on the chapter's previous board.

The board members of the Danish IAF chapter are:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| ▪ Andreas Isholm | ▪ Michael Ørbech, Sekretær (Secretary) |
| ▪ Bensaïd Vincent Jilil | |
| ▪ Michael Kvist, Økonomi (Treasurer) | ▪ Peter Grumstrup (Chair) |

Thanks so much to all the previous board members for their work.

IAF Jamaica Conference February 2013

The Art & Mastery of Facilitation - Power, Passion, Purpose, February 28 – March 2, 2013, Kingston, Jamaica

The conference theme, Power, Passion, Purpose, will explore ways in which Facilitation can be used as an effective tool by anyone in any industry to awaken the Power and wisdom of a group to initiate, spark and implement change; to unleash the Passion of engaged, motivated people who feel valued and respected for their contribution, and to provide clear direction and Purpose that focuses attention and brings goals to life.

You are invited to submit proposals for pre-conference and conference workshops for the 2013 IAF Jamaica Conference. Proposals are requested for 90 minute, day or one day workshops for the

conference days and for day or one day workshops for the pre-conference day.

Sessions may take the form of facilitated interactive learning, formal training session, case studies, keynote presentation or any other process you feel is most appropriate.

Please submit your completed Proposal by Friday, September 30, 2012, using this link to access the Proposal Form: https://acrobat.com/?d=S7*5bosspgb-K51gSc6x1w

The conference website and blog is at <http://iafj2013.wordpress.com>

Welcome, new and returning members

We would like to warmly welcome the following new members who joined IAF in August 2012:

- Julia Goga-Cooke, England
- Elgiz Henden, Turkey
- Tanguy Lunven, France
- Karina Mazur, Russia
- Per Nielsen, Denmark
- Siv Osterlund, Sweden

And we are delighted to welcome back all those who renewed their memberships in August:

- Christiane Amici Raboud, Switzerland
- Claire Bellmann, Switzerland

- Jolanda Buter, Netherlands
- Caroline Dunne, Sweden
- Ange Jones, England
- Michael Kvist, Denmark
- Antoinette Middeldorp, Netherlands
- Nel Mostert, Netherlands
- Martin Pearson, Scotland
- Mariya Pronina, Russia
- Cecilia Rydin, Sweden
- Min-Min Teh, England
- Keith Warren-Price, England
- Elisabeth Wille, Luxembourg
- Anette Wintlev-Jensen, Denmark



Facilitation Workshops and Meetings 2012

Find out more details about specific events listed here by visiting the Workshops and Meetings section of the IAF Europe Forum (<http://www.iaf-europe.eu>) If you would like to let others know about an event you are organizing, please email rosemary.cairns@iaf-europe.eu.

SEPTEMBER 2012

- Group Facilitation Methods, Sept. 4-5, Manchester, England (ICA:UK)

- Meeting of IAF Scotland chapter, Glasgow Sept. 10, 14:30
- Pinpoint Facilitation process, Sept. 11-12, Oxford, England (Pinpoint Facilitation)
- Managing conflict, Sept. 13, Glasgow, Scotland (Kinharvie Institute)
- Introduction to Graphics, Sept. 13, Oxford, England (Pinpoint Facilitation)



- Advanced Facilitation, Sept. 14, Oxford, England (Pinpoint Facilitation)
- Building your Gravitas Factor, Sept. 20, London, England (Zomi Communications) <http://gravitasfactor.eventbrite.com/?ebtv=C>
- St Ethelburga's Dialogue and Facilitation Skills Week, Sept. 24-28, London, England <http://tinyurl.com/dyuzwzu>
- Partnering for Change: A Gestalt Approach to Coaching. Sept. 27-Oct. 2, Glasgow, Scotland (Kinharvie Institute). Application deadline Aug. 1.
- Circle Training, Sept. 24-29, Oberursel (Frankfurt), Germany (PeerSpirit)

OCTOBER 2012

- The facilitative manager, Oct. 3-4, Glasgow, Scotland (Kinharvie Institute)
- CPF Assessment, Oct. 3-4, Geneva, Switzerland (IAF)
- IAF Europe conference, Oct. 5-7, Geneva (preconference events Oct. 3-4)
- Creative thinking in the workplace, Oct. 9, Glasgow, Scotland (Kinharvie Institute)

- Dynamic Facilitation and Wisdom Council Seminar, Oct. 15-17, Vorarlberg, Austria (Jim and Jean Rough)

NOVEMBER 2012

- Making meetings more effective, Nov. 7, Glasgow, Scotland (Kinharvie Institute)
- CPF Assessment in Dutch, Nov. 15, Rossum, Netherlands (IAF)
- Appreciative Leadership Development Program, Nov. 19-22, Amsterdam, Netherlands (Corporate for Positive Change) <https://positivechange.org/shop/appreciative-leadership-development-program%C2%A9-nov-19-22-2012/>
- CPF Assessment, Nov. 20-21, Stockholm, Sweden (IAF)
- Berlin Change Days 2012, Nov. 2-4, Berlin, Germany. Registration <http://www.berlinchangedays.com/>

DECEMBER 2012

- Meeting of IAF Scotland chapter, Glasgow Dec. 10, 14:30



IAF EUROPE CONFERENCE 2012

GENEVA • SWITZERLAND